

**CAL NORTHERN SCHOOL OF LAW**  
**LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT**  
**2019 - 2024**

**1. Assessment of Student Learning – Juris Doctor Program**

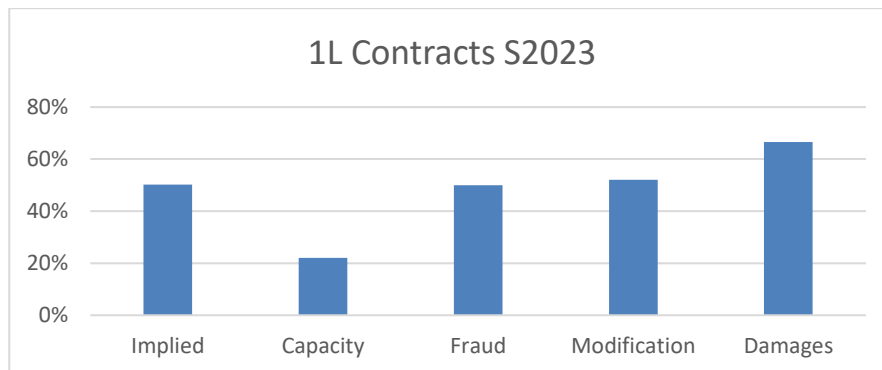
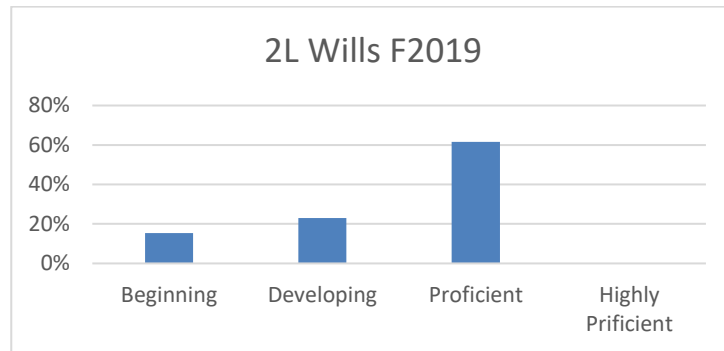
The Faculty of CNSL has established six Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) for the JD Program: Doctrinal Knowledge, Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Professionalism, Legal Research and Effective Dispute Resolution. In the 2019 to 2024 assessment cycle, Faculty assessed the first five PLOs over the range of all four years of study: First Year (1L), Second Year (2L), Third Year (3L), and Fourth Year (4L). CNSL uses the standards of Beginning, Developing, Proficient, and Highly Proficient to describe its proficiency levels. CNSL’s goal is that by graduation, all JD students will demonstrate skills at the Proficient or Highly Proficient level of competency.

Faculty generally use Formative Assessments during the year to assess how students are learning throughout the year and to keep students engaged. Faculty use Summative Assessments at the end of the academic year in order to assess how much students have learned.

**Juris Doctor PLO #1: Doctrinal Knowledge**

Doctrinal Knowledge was assessed in the 2L Wills class in the Fall of 2019 and in the 1L Contracts class in the Spring of 2023.

**PLO #1: Doctrinal Knowledge**



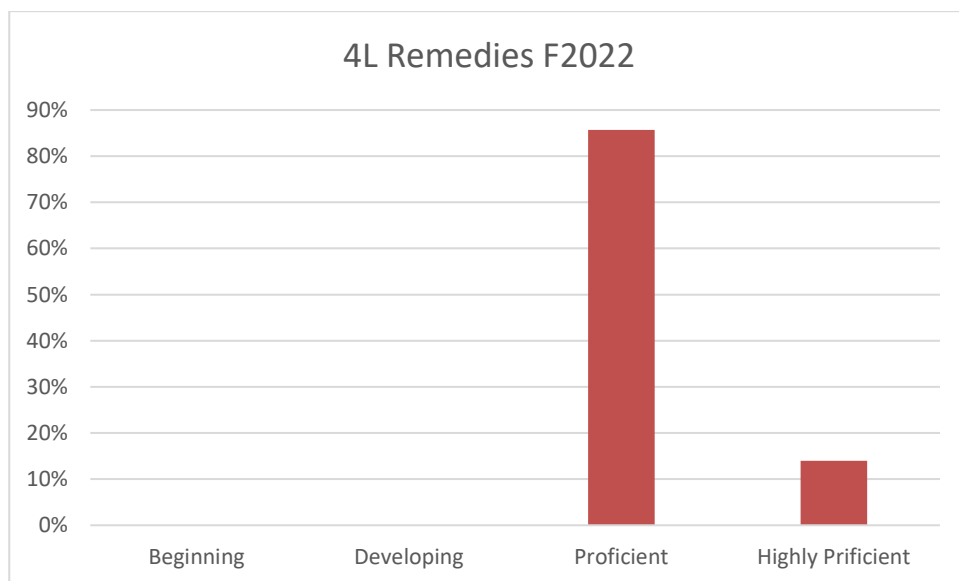
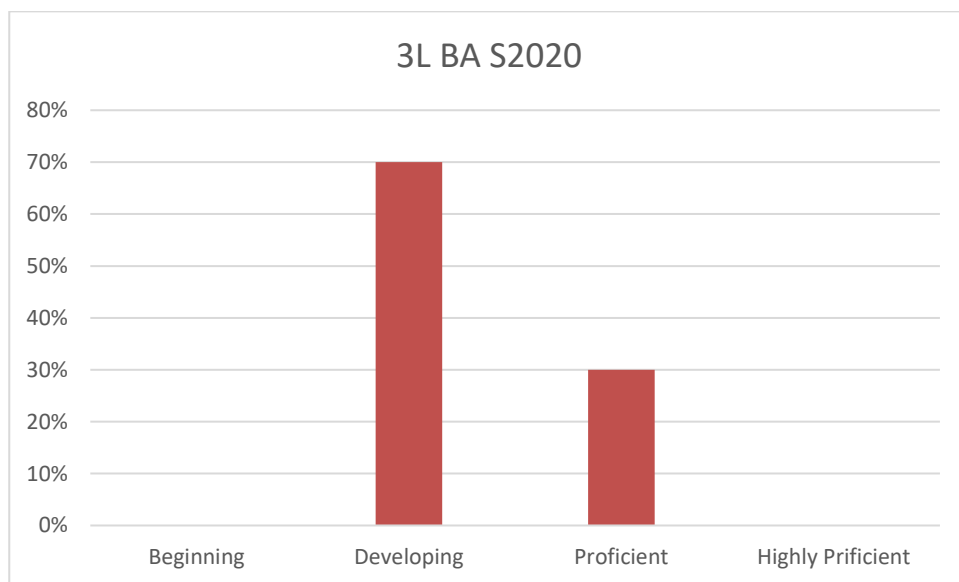
The students in the 1L Contracts class were assessed in specific areas of knowledge. The range for the 1L Contracts assessment across the subject matter areas shows that the students scored anywhere from 22% to 67%. This data shows that they are Beginning and Developing their ability learn the Doctrinal Knowledge of Contract Law. It is expected that 1L students will be at this stage of learning.

The 2L Wills data shows that that the students are becoming more Proficient in learning legal doctrine as they progress in school.

### **Juris Doctor PLO #2: Critical Thinking**

Critical Thinking was assessed in the 3L Business Associations class in the Spring of 2020 and in the 4L Remedies class in the Fall of 2022.

#### **PLO#2: Critical Thinking**

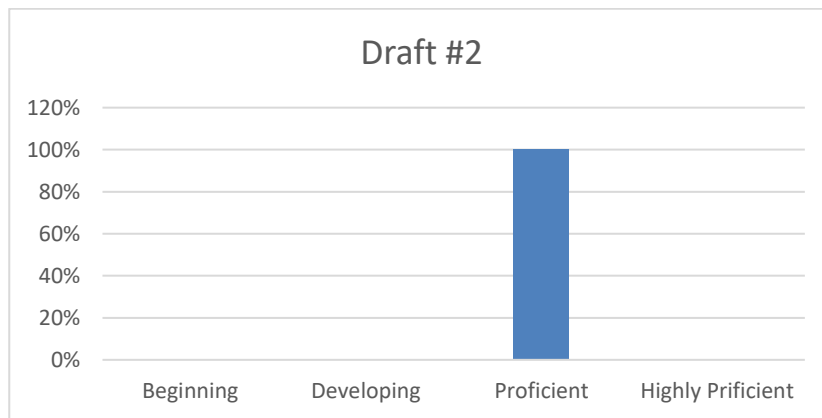
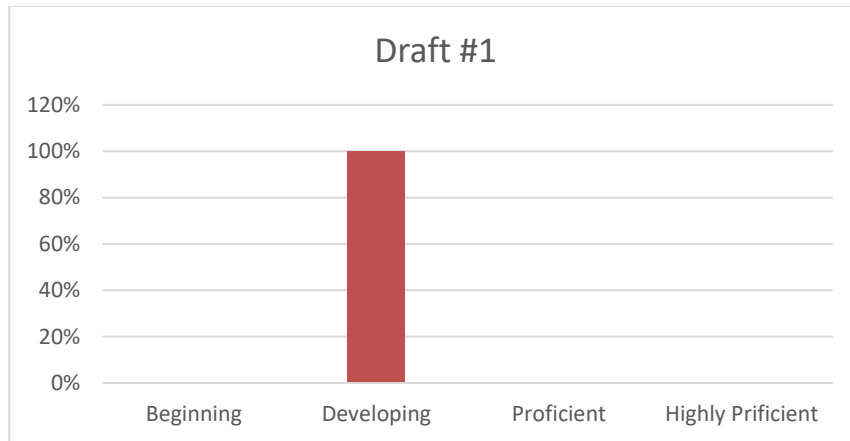


The data shows that, by the third year of legal studies, students are no longer at the beginning stage of learning. While they are still developing, they are becoming more proficient. By the fourth year of legal studies, students are proficient to highly proficient.

**Juris Doctor PLO #3: Communication Skills**

Communication Skills was assessed in the 2L Civil Procedure class in the Spring of 2023. The students in the Civil Procedure class were given the opportunity to compare each other’s draft complaints, write a demurrer to their classmates’ complaints, and then rewrite their complaints based on the demurrer.

**PLO #3: Communication Skills**



The data shows that the students improved dramatically in their understanding of and ability to communicate orally with each other and through their written complaints and demurrers. This assessment also shows student improvement in PLO #2 Critical Thinking and PLO #5 Legal Research.

### Juris Doctor PLO #4: Professionalism

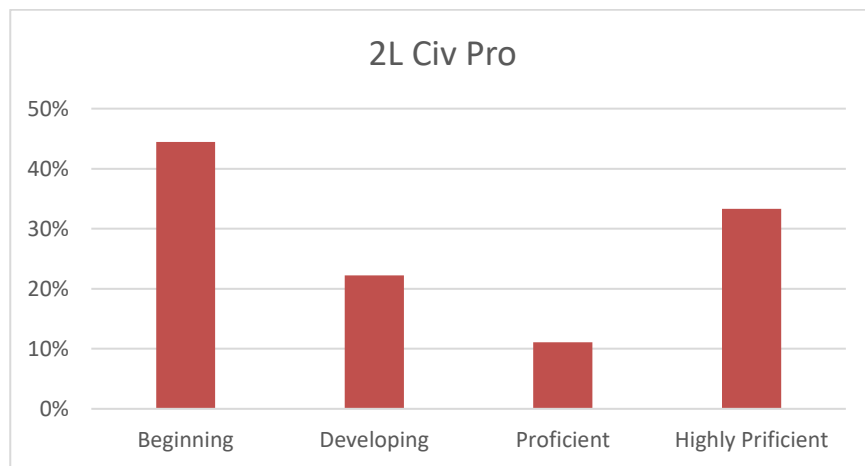
Professionalism was assessed in the 3L Legal Self Help Clinic in the Spring of 2022. Students were observed interacting with the public who sought legal assistance.



As stated above, the 3L students are no longer at the beginning stages of learning how to be lawyers and are becoming proficient and highly proficient.

### Juris Doctor PLO #5: Legal Research

Legal Research was assessed in the 2L Civil Procedure class in the Spring of 2021. The Civ Pro class includes an element of practical application of the law by having students research legal issues and draft pleadings based upon that research.



The data shows that, while some of the 2L students are still at the beginning stage of learning the practical aspects of Civil Procedure, they are developing their skills and becoming more proficient. While the specific PLO assessed here was #5 Legal Research, this exercise also shows that the 2L students are becoming more proficient in their written communication skills and in critical thinking.

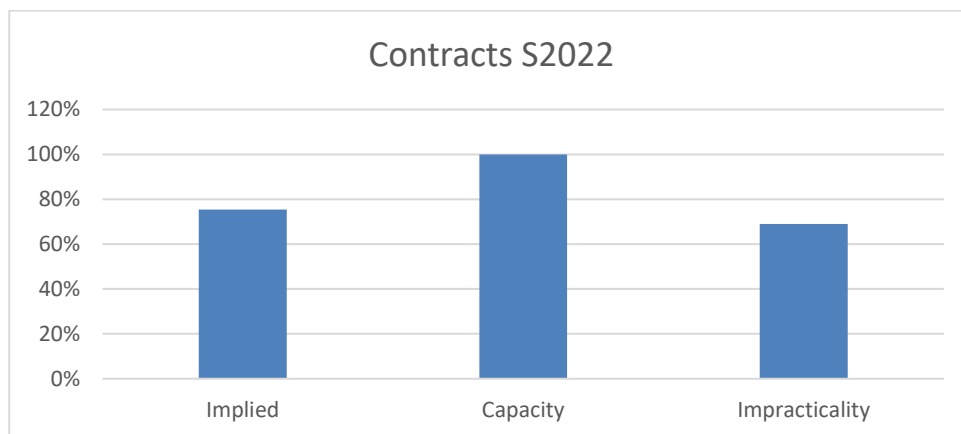
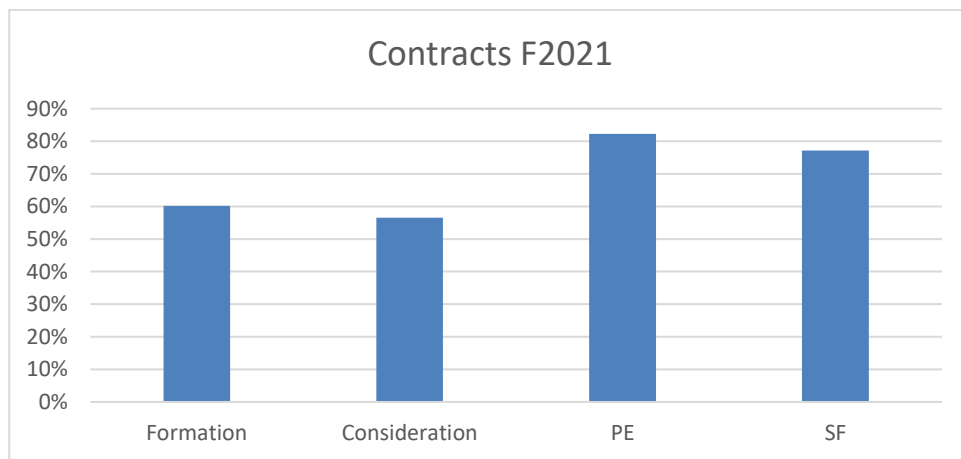
## 2. Assessment of Student Learning – Master of Legal Studies Program

CNSL has established three Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) for the MLS Program: Understanding Legal Principals, Critical Thinking, and Legal Research. In the 2019 to 2024 assessment cycle, CNSL assessed PLO 1, Understanding Legal Principals in the First Year (1L) three times: in the Contracts class in both the Fall and Spring 2021-2022 semesters and in the Torts class in the Fall of 2023. CNSL uses the standards of Beginning, Developing, Proficient, and Highly Proficient to describe its proficiency levels. CNSL's goal is that by degree conference, all MLS students will demonstrate skills at the Proficient or Highly Proficient level of competency.

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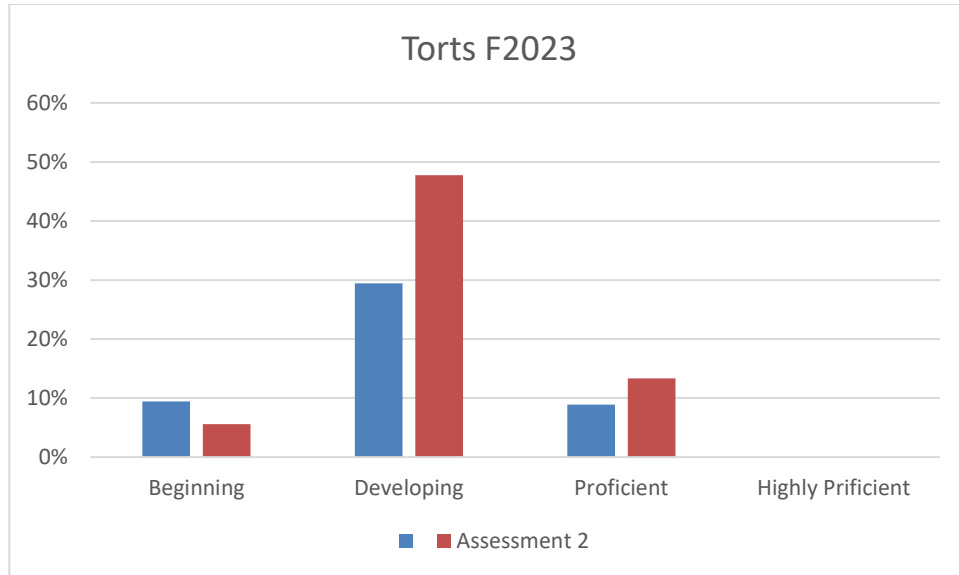
### **MLS PLO #1: Understanding Legal Principals**

Understanding Legal Principals was assessed in the 1L class in the Fall of 2021 and in the Spring of 2022.



The data shows that the 1L MLS students in the Contracts class improve over time in their understanding of the Legal Principals of Contract Law.

Understanding Legal Principals was also assessed relatively early in the first semester Fall 2023 and reassessed later in the semester to determine if further strategies of instruction were beneficial in student achievement of Understanding the Legal Principals of Torts.



The data shows that MLS students improved in their proficiency by approximately 15% moving from an average score of 51% to an average score of 64%.